

Testimony for SB 554

I am a former educator, having worked in schools k-12. In every school I have worked in, adults have easy access to schools and students. Despite the fact they need to stop in the office, parents and volunteers can still easily find their way into classrooms. They can find their way onto playgrounds. They can very easily find their way onto parking lots, an especially volatile area when students are coming to and leaving school.

Any of these parents, volunteers, or even contractors with districts to do work in schools can bring in a concealed firearm. We all hope they have gone through a background check to own that firearm, but we also know that background checks still have lots of loopholes, that the background check may have done quite a while ago, and that people can easily just 'loan' their guns to whoever they want...including someone walking into a school for a deceptively benign purpose.

Guns and other weapons have no place anywhere near children. We love to think that people have the best intentions, many feel that their second amendment rights means they should be able to carry their weapon anywhere, and many have a certain level of trust in schools and daycares to keep students safe.

Over the past 5 years, according to Everytown For Gun Safety, there have been at least 433 incidents of gunfire on school grounds, resulting in 138 deaths and 265 injuries. 138 deaths too many and 265 injuries too many.

Many years ago I learned that a teacher died at a school I had once worked at because someone brought a weapon onto the school grounds. Like most schools, there were no screenings, no searches, no suspicion. One of the most awesome teachers I have ever known died in that shooting.

To help protect students and staff in our schools and in our daycares, and to protect all of our Oregon residents around the state from gun violence, I urge you to pass SB 554.

Thank you

Lisa Stiller, Beaverton, OR